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PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT ON THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. My report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318) was issued on 13 April 1998. That report has been considered by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. It has also been the subject of discussion in various other forums within and outside the United Nations including the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

2. The Security Council established its own ad hoc Working Group to review the recommendations in the report pertaining to peace and security. The Working Group developed concrete proposals for action on: (a) support for regional and subregional initiatives in the areas of conflict prevention and maintenance of peace; (b) establishment of an international mechanism to assist host Governments in maintaining the security and neutrality of refugee camps; (c) strengthening of Africa's peacekeeping capacity; (d) strengthening the effectiveness of arms sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council; (e) addressing urgently the question of arms flows; and (f) enhancing the Council's ability to monitor activities authorized by it but carried out by member States or a coalition of States. After considering the proposals of its Working Group, the Council, between September and November 1998, adopted four resolutions and issued three statements of the President of the Council containing recommendations that supplemented those contained in my report (Council resolutions 1196 (1998), 1197 (1998), 1208 (1998) and 1209 (1998); and statements of the President of the Council S/PRST/1998/28, S/PRST/1998/29 and S/PRST/1998/35).

3. In its resolution 53/92 of 7 December 1998, the General Assembly established an open-ended working group to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of my report. The report was also considered by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999. The deliberations of the Economic and Social Council highlighted the need for substantial and sustained economic growth and social development by African countries to meet the challenges that they faced.

4. For its part, the Secretariat established working groups composed of the members of the various Executive Committees to examine the recommendations; agree on a division of labour; develop a plan of action for their implementation; and report on follow-up actions including on problems encountered, if any.

5. Sections II and III of the present report contain most of the follow-up actions that have been initiated or completed in the areas of peace and security as well as in the development and related areas in implementation of the recommendations contained in the previous report.

II. RESPONDING TO SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT

A. Peacemaking

Appointing special mediators or special commissions to look into the sources of dispute, build confidence and recommend practical solutions

6. Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have decided to establish a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security. The ECOWAS Mechanism contains several innovative features among which are a "Mediation and Security Council" and a "Council of Elders" aimed at facilitating conflict mediation efforts. I welcome this important initiative and urge the support of the international community.

7. I have appointed special envoys and representatives who have been actively involved in the various negotiations initiated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), ECOWAS, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to help peacefully resolve the conflicts in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea and Sierra Leone. Furthermore, I have appointed a Special Envoy in Africa to follow issues of priority concern to OAU and the United Nations and to coordinate various initiatives.

Avoiding the temptation of rival mediation efforts

8. All too often, the proliferation of initiatives has complicated and at times frustrated peacemaking efforts of the United Nations and others. I consulted closely with OAU and subregional organizations to avoid rival mediation efforts and to concentrate the resources and comparative advantage of all involved in a common effort to prevent and resolve conflict. Within this framework, in the case of Somalia, I established a forum - the Ambassadorial Meeting of External Actors - which groups together all members of the Security Council and the countries and regional organizations that have undertaken peacemaking initiatives. The forum has made it difficult for anyone to undertake unilateral initiatives without informing the Group and taking its views into account. Another useful mechanism has been the establishment of "Friends of the Secretary-General" or "Friends of (country)" to bring together countries and organizations with particular interest and influence or a contribution to make in peacemaking efforts in a given country.

Making greater use of contact groups and special conferences

9. Last July, I convened a Special Consultation on Guinea and a Special Conference on Sierra Leone. The Special Consultation on Guinea was a joint United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat initiative. It was the first meeting of its kind convened to assist a country in which there has not been an outbreak of conflict. It was intended as a new and comprehensive effort by the United Nations to draw attention to the difficult challenges confronted by Guinea and to help mobilize support. A second special Consultation, focusing among other things on the impact of subregional conflicts and the massive presence of refugees in Guinea, has been tentatively scheduled for November 1999.

10. The Special Consultation on Sierra Leone held on 30 July 1998 focused on mobilizing support from the international community for the Government's disarmament and demobilization programme; the activities of the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG); emergency humanitarian assistance and the longer-term reconstruction and rehabilitation needs of the country. An International Contact Group, led by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was also established to mobilize and coordinate political, financial and technical support for Sierra Leone. The Group met in London in November 1998 and in New York in April 1999 in the aftermath of the rebel attack on Freetown. It met again in London on 28 July 1999, following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) (S/1999/777).

11. On the initiative of ECOWAS, a "Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau" was established in February 1999 to support my efforts to help consolidate peace and reconciliation and assist in the mobilization of resources for post-conflict peace-building in the country. The United Nations has organized two donor meetings in support of ECOMOG in Guinea-Bissau. The second meeting took place immediately following the UNDP Emergency Round Table on Guinea-Bissau held in Geneva on 4 and 5 May.

Targeting sanctions

12. The Secretariat continues to encourage the efforts by Member States, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations aimed at rendering Security Council applied sanctions a more effective and less blunt instrument. Within this framework, the Secretariat has assisted the Swiss Government in organizing seminars in Interlaken, the latest having taken place in March 1999, on Targeting Financial Sanctions, the reports of which were made available to the members of the Council. Furthermore, a symposium on Targeted Sanctions, sponsored by eight non-governmental organizations, was held in New York on 7 December 1998, again with substantive support from the Secretariat, and the active participation of the Chairmen of the various Sanctions Committees; other members of the Security Council made presentations to the symposium, and the final report was made available to the members of the Council. In December 1998, the Overseas Development Institute in the United Kingdom organized a seminar in London, with United Nations participation, which sought to reinforce the current debate on targeted sanctions. Currently, plans are

under way for the organization by the German Government, with United Nations participation, of two seminars in order to explore the feasibility of better-targeted sanctions with respect to arms embargoes and travel bans.

13. Moreover, the Secretariat has continued to provide support to the various Security Council Sanctions Committees and to offer, upon request, advice on possible ways to enhance their working practices. In this connection, the Secretariat is also supporting the work of the Angola Sanctions Committee and the members of the two expert panels established to undertake studies to trace violations in arms trafficking, oil supplies and the diamond trade as well as the movement of União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) funds.

Criminalizing the violation of Security Council arms embargoes

14. Consultations were held last year with a number of African States with a view to encouraging them to adopt national legislation making the violation of Security Council arms embargoes a criminal offence. While commending the merits of the recommendations, some countries expressed concern at what they considered to be double standards applied by the Council when imposing sanctions, which, in their view, have undermined sanctions regimes. As a follow-up, recently, the Secretariat sent letters to all African States requesting information on measures undertaken by their Governments with regard to national legislation.

Reducing the purchase of arms and munitions to below 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP)

15. The Secretariat has consulted with Governments and requested information on measures undertaken. Many countries are of the view that, because of the increased insecurity caused by ongoing armed conflicts in Africa, it would be difficult to implement the recommendation without first addressing the root causes of the conflicts. In fact, it was reported during 1998 and 1999 that there was a significant increase in the purchases of arms and munitions by a number of African States.

Addressing the problem of illicit arms flows and small arms

16. The Secretariat consulted with OAU, ECOWAS, SADC and the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa on this matter. The recent OAU Summit has mandated the Secretary-General of OAU to convene a regional conference on small arms that would provide specific recommendations on the halting of the use, transfer and illegal manufacturing of small arms. The Standing Advisory Committee, which conducted a seminar last July on the implementation in Central Africa of the recommendation contained in my report, will convene a subregional conference on the proliferation and illicit marketing of arms and drugs in Octob r. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa served as the operational framework for the implementation of the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Import, Export and Manufacturing of Small Arms which came into effect in November 1998.

17. The Secretariat organized in August 1999 a workshop in Lomé on illicit trafficking in small arms in Africa, which was attended by representatives from

25 African States, three regional organizations and several non-governmental organizations, aimed at providing African States with an opportunity to discuss the continent's current experience with the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, and to develop a strategy for addressing the problem. The Secretariat is also promoting better understanding of the consequences of illicit arms flows. United Nations Television (UN-TV) is working on a documentary on small arms in South Africa and Mozambique. An exhibit was held at Headquarters in July to raise public awareness of the impact of small arms on children which will later travel to different areas of the world. The Secretariat launched last October an Internet Web site on the consequences of illicit flows of small arms and has initiated a campaign against the illicit trafficking of arms. In addition, the transfer of small arms will be a key issue of the Neighbourhood Initiative of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, which will focus on cross-border problems of particular relevance to children.

Identifying international arms merchants

18. The Secretariat is working on a feasibility study for restricting the manufacture and trade of small arms as mandated by the General Assembly, a first step of which was the holding of a consultative meeting of experts and contact with some non-governmental organizations and individuals who have been tracking the flows of arms into Africa. In due course, it will compile available information for internal use.

B. Peacekeeping

Supporting African peacekeeping capacity

19. At a special meeting convened by the Secretariat in coordination with OAU, on 21 January 1999, 51 participants, including African States, discussed ways and means of implementing the recommendations on enhancing African peacekeeping capacity. The participants broadly supported the United Nations proposals for training and information exchange and considered the establishment of a regular forum for strengthening coordination, better utilization of resources and follow-up action. The Secretariat, in consultation with OAU and donor countries, is making arrangements for the convening of a formal meeting.

20. The United Nations and OAU have also been working on a staff exchange programme, which has already included visits to the OAU Headquarters by officers of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat from the Situation Centre and Policy and Analysis Unit. Discussions are under way on the feasibility of arranging a secondment of personnel to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Situation Centre and the OAU Conflict Management Centre.

21. In cooperation with OAU, the Secretariat has already undertaken to serve as a clearing house for the collection and dissemination of information on enhancing African capacity for peacekeeping. Some important information concerning training and other assistance for African countries has already been received from Member States and the Secretariat has posted on the Internet its

database, which is available to all countries. Additional resources and timely responses from Member States would be required to develop and regularly update this important undertaking.

22. In training assistance, the Secretariat, through the United Nations Training Assistance Team (UNTAT), has provided expert advice to various bilateral and multilateral training activities in Africa and train-the-trainer courses conducted twice a year by the Secretariat in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Staff College project in Turin. In 1998 and 1999, the Secretariat participated in the organization and conduct of some 15 multinational training programmes most of which were held in Africa. This is an area of activity that has been seriously affected by the recent phasing out of gratis military personnel, as requested by the General Assembly.

23. Increased focus has also been given to the training and organization of civilian police for peacekeeping. United Nations training teams provided such assistance at the invitation of Egypt, Ghana and Senegal and participated in the SADC police training course held in South Africa in November 1998. The Secretariat is also planning to organize a course for police trainers from 18 African countries currently contributing police personnel to peacekeeping missions.

24. In coordination with ECOWAS, the Secretariat participated last June in the organizational seminar of a newly established regional peacekeeping centre in Zambakro (Côte d'Ivoire). It also participated in the preparatory seminar, held in Libreville, for the Central African regional peacekeeping exercise planned for early 2000. The Secretariat cooperated with SADC in the Blue Crane Exercise in South Africa held in April 1999 and the opening of the regional peacekeeping training centre in Harare in June 1999.

25. The United Nations Standby Arrangement (SBA) System teams visited six Southern African States and provided briefings to 18 permanent missions of African States in New York. As a result of those efforts, 11 additional African States joined SBA, bringing the total number of African countries participating in the system to 23. The police activities of the SBA are also being expanded.

26. The provision of logistic support remains one of the key elements of enhancing African capacity for peacekeeping. The Secretariat will continue to assist African States by facilitating contacts with donors as it has done in the case of ECOMOG. This vital area deserves particular attention within the framework of the above-mentioned proposed group on African peacekeeping capacity. In consultation with the OAU, ECOWAS and SADC, the secretariat has recently completed a general lessons learned study on the cooperation between the United Nations and subregional organizations.

27. In the area of demining, assessment missions by the United Nations Mine Action Service are planned to Namibia, Zimbabwe and other countries in Africa to discuss landmine problems. However, the financing of United Nations mine action programmes, which is generated almost exclusively through voluntary contribution, remains well below requirements.

Contributing to United Nations and OAU trust funds

28. The United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa has been used over the last two years to support United Nations training activities as the UNTAT seminar in Ghana, a mission management seminar in Zambia, a logistics course in Kenya and a Standby Arrangement briefing in six Southern African States in 1999. Further progress in the realization of the various ideas and programmes to enhance African peacekeeping capacity will depend on the adequate and flexible support of Member States. To date, however, the Fund has received only one contribution: US$ 250,745 from the United Kingdom. OAU has also established a peace fund to assist in building African capacity for peacekeeping. I have repeatedly urged Member States to contribute to these funds.

C. Humanitarian assistance

Taking a hard look at how humanitarian assistance is provided and for what purposes

29. In the light of increasing difficulties in delivering humanitarian assistance in Africa, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has taken a number of initiatives. It carried out studies on strategic coordination in the Great Lakes region in order to identify ways of improving the effectiveness of humanitarian action. As a follow-up, IASC has made recommendations aimed at increasing system-wide accountability and ownership of humanitarian operations. In particular, through joint monitoring and lessons learned exercises, IASC will undertake a study of strategic monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian assistance in the fall of 1999, as called for by the Economic and Social Council.

Holding combatants financially liable to their victims under international law

30. This principle is now provided for in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) (PCNICC/1999/INF/3). It was established, however, on a level of generality and the specificities of reparations to victims, including restitution, compensation and rehabilitation, would have to be elaborated further by the Court. In addition, the conventional mechanism developed in the ICC Statute to implement the principle of financial accountability could function only when the ICC Statute enters into force, in the relationship between the States parties, and in connection with the surrender and conviction of any one particular accused. Having been established in an international convention, the principle of financial accountability must now await its implementation through the international and the national process.

Ensuring adherence to international humanitarian and human rights norms by all parties to a conflict

31. I promulgated on 6 August the Secretary-General's bulletin on the observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law (ST/SGB/1999/13), which sets out the fundamental rules and principles of international humanitarian law applicable to members of United Nations forces

when in situations of armed conflict they are actively engaged therein as combatants. My report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/1999/957), which was considered by the Council in September, contains detailed proposals on the legal and physical protection of civilians to enhance compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law during armed conflict.

32. Other related initiatives include the development of a Code of Conduct that governs the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Sierra Leone and the agreement on principles for the provision of assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Most important, adherence to international humanitarian and human rights norms, including free and unimpeded access for humanitarian workers and supplies, has been clearly stipulated in the Sierra Leone peace agreement signed in Lomé as well as in the Guinea-Bissau peace agreement.

33. To ensure policy coordination among humanitarian agencies, IASC has established task forces dealing with humanitarian action and human rights as well as gender and humanitarian assistance. At the field level, effective collaboration between humanitarian and human rights actors has also taken place in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Burundi. In addition, a policy statement on the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance programmes was issued by IASC on 31 May 1999.

34. UNHCR has assisted in the drafting of national refugee legislation, provided support to government structures in charge of refugee issues, and trained government officials dealing with refugee matters. In Rwanda, as part of the repatriation programme, UNHCR, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), provided assistance to the judiciary.

Funding special human rights missions from assessed contributions

35. The implementation of this recommendation is linked to the financial situation of the United Nations. I continue to attach importance to this recommendation and will strive for its progressive implementation within the framework of the programme budgets.

Expanding the concept of children as "zones of peace"

36. The Secretariat is actively working on improving the situation of children in African countries affected by conflict. Through my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, commitments have been obtained from various Governments and insurgency groups to end the recruitment of children under age 18, demobilize and reintegrate child soldiers and ensure humanitarian access to protect children. In this connection, specific agreements were reached in Sierra Leone, Burundi, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Secretariat's efforts facilitated the anti-polio vaccination campaign carried out in August 1999 by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

37. The Secretariat is actively seeking to ensure that the child's protection, rights and welfare are afforded high priority in peace negotiations and throughout the process of consolidating peace in the aftermath of conflict.

This will entail that adequate resources are made available. In discussion with parties to the Arusha (Burundi) and IGADD (the Sudan) peace processes, my Special Representative has received commitments to include children's concerns in the peace agendas, and the Secretariat is now developing concrete proposals to translate these commitments into action. The recent Lomé peace agreement provided for the appointment of a child protection coordinator and two child protection officers in the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone. In the same vein, two child protection advisers will serve in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

38. In support of efforts to stop the use of child soldiers, I established a minimum age for service with United Nations peacekeeping operations, whereby Member States were requested to contribute national contingents preferably not younger than 21 years of age, but definitely not under age 18. Contributing countries were requested not to send civilian police and military observers younger than 25 years of age to serve in peacekeeping operations. The policy aimed at ensuring that the United Nations would set the best possible example.

39. In the same vein, my bulletin on the observance of international humanitarian law by members of United Nations forces contains provisions for the protection of children against indecent assault, and their protection while detained by United Nations forces for participating in attacks against the force. The scope of application of the bulletin, however, is limited to members of United Nations operations.

Ensuring that all refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), notably women and children, are adequately protected

40. Concerned by the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs), IASC has developed new policy tools for their protection and is in the process of developing a system that will routinely and rapidly assign responsibility among its members for protection and assistance activities.

41. UNHCR has initiated the Action for the Rights of Children Training Programme which includes a specific age-gender perspective and aims at increasing the capacity of UNHCR, government and non-governmental organization field staff to protect and care for children and adolescents in refugee situations. The initiative also aims at ensuring that girls and boys benefit equally from all protection and assistance efforts.

Locating refugees at a reasonable distance from the areas of conflicts and the borders

42. In Guinea, Liberia, Chad, the Central African Republic, Botswana, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, refugee populations have been moved away from the borders with UNHCR's assistance. It should be noted that the relocation of refugees in some cases was delayed by internal conflicts in the host country or by the desire of refugees to remain close to their country of origin. The cooperation of host countries is often a condition for ensuring the relocation of refugees.

Assisting the host Governments in maintaining the security and neutrality of refugee camps and settlements

43. UNHCR has been assisting several African countries, for example, the United Republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Guinea and Uganda, in dealing with security in refugee camps by strengthening their police and other law enforcement structures. It has provided training, transport and communications equipment as well as funds. For example, in the United Republic of Tanzania, 278 policemen and an internationally recruited security liaison officer have been deployed to the refugee camps since October 1998. In Kenya, UNHCR activities include supporting the work of a mobile court near refugee settlements.

44. United Nations peacekeeping operations cooperate with UNHCR in ensuring the security of refugee camps and settlements including disarming former combatants, as was the case in the Central African Republic.

Ensuring that the United Nations humanitarian coordinator in the field will operate under the overall authority of the representative of the Secretary-General

45. To further improve strategic coordination at the field level, the Secretariat has developed a note of guidance clarifying the relations between the humanitarian coordinator and my special representative, conforming to principles set out in my directive on the responsibilities of special representatives. The note sets out the responsibility of both the humanitarian coordinator and the special representative of the Secretary-General and clearly specifies reporting requirement and lines of authority. The note also outlines practical instructions to ensure that United Nations humanitarian actions are consistent with the broader United Nations peace and development activities.

Ensuring that United Nations humanitarian action is coordinated and fully consistent with broader United Nations peace and development activities

46. The United Nations has been further developing the strategic framework approach designed in part to ensure that humanitarian action supports overall peace-building activities. Following consultation with ACC, Generic Guidelines for the Further Application of the Strategic Framework were approved. The experience to date has afforded some valuable lessons, and the approach is now being applied in Sierra Leone and Burundi.

47. Additionally, an IASC report on "Protecting Principles Under Threat" provides guidance for country teams to ensure coherence between humanitarian, political and peacekeeping operations. The elements of this document were used in Somalia to develop the consolidated appeal.

48. IASC has strengthened its coordination activities in relation to emergencies across the African continent. Individual country situations are reviewed in depth at the regular meetings of the IASC Working Group. In addition, resident and humanitarian coordinators in countries in crisis held joint consultations in Geneva in December 1998 to review policy initiatives of common concern. IASC has also worked to ensure that, in African countries facing humanitarian challenges, those selected for Resident Coordinator posts

have the requisite skills to fulfil humanitarian coordination functions. From a regional perspective, the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) system (which provides prompt information on country situations through the Internet and other communication channels) has been strengthened in East, Southern and West Africa.

Ensuring that relief efforts are delivered in ways that promote long-term development objectives

49. The 1999 humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council emphasized the need for adequate relief-development linkages. Steps taken by IASC to address relief-development linkages included the establishment of an inter-agency Reference Group tasked with resolving issues related to the programming of post-conflict activities in an integrated manner. Building on other similar initiatives in the United Nations system, including the World Food Programme's (WFP's) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO), the report of the IASC Reference Group, entitled "Bridging the Gap", will form the basis for a series of actions in selected African countries.

50. IASC has also developed the consolidated appeal process (CAP) as a strategic planning tool that promotes the transition from relief to development. The relevant Secretariat departments and programmes have also collaborated to develop the linkages between CAP and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in cases where the two are being used together, including in Burundi and Uganda. This will further enhance cooperation and joint planning between relief and development partners.

D. Post-conflict peace-building

Establishing post-conflict peace-building support structures

51. Last December, the Security Council approved my proposal to establish the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), which has been mandated to help create an enabling environment for restoring and consolidating peace and democracy by supporting national reconciliation efforts, organizing free and transparent elections, and seeking the commitment of the Government and other parties to adopting a programme of voluntary arms collection, disposal and destruction. UNOGBIS became operational on 25 June 1999 with the arrival in Guinea-Bissau of my Representative.

52. In Liberia, the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Liberia (UNOL) has been instrumental in contributing to the consolidation of peace in the country. It participated in many efforts aimed at facilitating negotiations between ECOWAS and the Government; contributed to defusing tension; conducted training courses for members of the Liberian National Police, specifically in the human rights aspects of police duties; encouraged the Government to ratify human rights conventions; helped establish a more effective coordination among the Government, United Nations agencies and donors; and assisted in the destruction of weapons. In Central Africa, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), which has successfully supported the legislative elections, is now assisting in the conduct of the presidential

elections. In Sierra Leone, the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) is currently being expanded to expedite critical disarmament and demobilization and to perform other vital tasks, including human rights promotion and humanitarian assistance.

Providing for a peace-friendly structural adjustment programme

53. Last July, I wrote to the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to the President of the World Bank to encourage them to give greater financial and organization support to post-conflict peace-building efforts. I suggested the establishment of a group comprising IMF, the World Bank and the United Nations to study how best we can support countries that are emerging from conflict or assist countries that become flooded with refugees as a result of instability in the region. It should be possible to develop a way of assisting such countries in a flexible and creative manner. I understand that meetings are under way this week in Washington at the World Bank on Sierra Leone and Liberia.

III. BUILDING A DURABLE PEACE AND PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

A. Good governance

Securing respect for human rights and the rule of law

54. The majority of African countries have signed and ratified the major international human rights instruments. As at 21 May 1999, 42 of 53 African countries have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex), and 40 have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex). Forty-two countries have ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (General Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX), annex), while 48 have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex). Twenty-seven countries have signed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (General Assembly resolution 260 A (III)), and 30 have ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (General Assembly resolution 39/46, annex). Fifty-two countries have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex), making it the most widely ratified treaty. Since the issuance of the Secretary-General's report, 32 African countries have signed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

55. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDP have been active in establishing regional and country-level support for Governments in the elaboration of human rights action plans. Other organizations, including UNHCR, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), provided assistance in the drafting of national legislation as well as technical advisory services in their respective areas of competence. The United Nations

Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNICEF have taken also initiatives with particular focus on women and children.

Promoting transparency and accountability in public administration

56. Within the context of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, UNDP and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), with contribution from other United Nations bodies, organized the Second Africa Governance Forum (AGF II), in Ghana in June 1998, on accountability and transparency. The Forum sought to provide a platform for African Governments, civil society and external partners to engage in a dialogue on progress towards the goals of greater accountability and transparency, and promote partnerships.

57. The Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) convened, in October 1998 and February 1999, ministerial meetings in Washington, D.C., involving 11 African countries, which resulted in the adoption of principles to combat corruption and the agreement to implement those principles in the respective countries and to promote them subregionally and regionally. In collaboration with GCA, the World Bank has sent multidisciplinary missions in a selected number of African countries to identify the causes and effects of corruption and to propose means to address the causes. Implementation of the resulting recommendations - which include measures to strengthen the capacity of parliaments to exercise oversight roles; legal, judicial, financial and public sector reforms; and strengthening the media and other "watchdog" agencies - is being monitored closely.

58. The Secretariat, through the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, has focused on two specific areas of activities, governance and ethics. In the former, it provided assistance to several African countries, including Burundi, Liberia, Mozambique and South Africa, in the development of national capacity in the areas of human rights, justice and the participation of civil society. It supported a Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service organized in Morocco in December 1998. The Conference adopted the Rabat Declaration which promotes professionalism and ethical standards in the civil service.

Enhancing administrative capacity

59. The World Bank is assisting in building capacity for decentralization and local governance in sub-Saharan Africa. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has initiated projects in Ghana, Guinea and Senegal with a view to covering all sub-Saharan Africa and in which support for rural decentralization is used as a tool for strengthening the capacities of local populations and promoting participation in the decision-making process. UNDP and donor partners, including, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, are helping to strengthen police security in rural areas of Rwanda, in a programme that is providing training and housing accommodations for local police in order to increase recruitment.

60. UNDP and ECA organized in consultation with the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat the Third Africa Governance Forum (AGF III), focusing on "Good Governance and Conflict Management for Durable Peace and Sustainable Development", in Bamako, Mali, in June 1999. The meeting

proposed strategies and recommendations for reducing conflicts. As an integral part of the AGF process, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, supported by UNDP, is implementing a governance inventory project in 24 African countries, which will enhance the capacity of countries to coordinate governance programmes at the country level.

Strengthening democratic governance

61. UNDP has provided technical and financial assistance to various African countries for the conduct of multi-party elections, and to promote good governance through the strengthening of their judicial systems, for example, in Mozambique, Zambia and Lesotho.

62. The Secretariat, through the Department of Political Affairs, has continued to provide support and technical assistance to electoral commissions in Africa and to coordinate the activities of international observers. Such assistance was provided during 1999 to, among others, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa, as well as the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

B. Sustainable development

Creating a positive environment for investment

63. A forum to review the competitiveness of African economies was organized in Dakar in March 1999, organized by UNDP, in cooperation with the Government of Senegal, and involving the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the African Development Bank, OAU, ECA and UNESCO. The forum agreed on steps to be taken to create a positive environment for investment and to enhance competitiveness. UNIDO also promoted investment in Africa, convening investment promotion conferences for Guinea, Uganda and the Southern Africa region in 1998 and 1999.

64. I have underscored the need to draw the attention of investors to progress and new opportunities in Africa. In this regard, the Internet is an effective mechanism in respect of rapidly disseminated information to aid investment decisions. To promote privatization in Africa, the World Bank and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) have created a specialized window within IPAnet, MIGA's Internet-based market place for investment opportunities, to launch Privatization Link, profiling investment opportunities arising from privatization. MIGA also supported private investment by issuing guarantees totalling $126 million covering projects in Angola, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique and Uganda, which facilitated $2.3 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI).

Investing in human resources

65. In the area of basic education, the United Nations organizations, under the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative, have jointly formulated an action plan for 16 African countries with the lowest rate of primary school enrolment (LEC) and low female literacy rates: Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti,

Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia and Sierra Leone.

66. With UNICEF's technical and financial assistance, OAU has elaborated and facilitated the adoption of the Programme of Action for the Decade of Education by the African Ministers of Education and the OAU Summit in Algiers in 1999. The Programme stresses the need for basic education for all children and puts special emphasis on the education of the girl child, child soldiers, refugees and displaced children, and the need for education about human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). UNICEF has also launched a global girls' education programme, with Africa being its first priority, through the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI). The programme is being implemented in over 20 African countries and has mobilized over $60 million.

67. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has been promoting and encouraging the education and training of African scientists in meteorology and other environmental sciences including hydrology. It has established a network of Regional Meteorological Training Centres (RMTCs) in Africa as a means of achieving capacity-building.

68. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided assistance to several countries in building national capacity to implement population and development programmes in reproductive health and rights, population and development; and in advocacy, as well as in cross-cutting areas such as gender, information, education and communication. Capacity-building has also included strengthening of the population/planning departments to coordinate the multisectoral approach involved in the implementation of population policies and utilization of population variables in development planning. Some of the countries benefiting from this assistance were Namibia, South Africa, Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, the Niger, Zambia, Senegal and Burkina Faso.

Public-health priorities

69. The Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) has intensified its action in Africa, in partnership with African Governments, regional bodies, bilateral development agencies, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations and the corporate sector, with commitments from large pharmaceutical corporations, the entertainment industry and the Global Business Council on AIDS. The partnership will seek to develop joint multisectoral action plans prepared with major national and international stakeholders and mobilize resources to fund them.

70. Malaria prevention and control constitute another significant area where the efforts of the United Nations system are directed. The roll-back malaria campaign led by WHO in close collaboration with UNICEF aims at cutting the number of deaths from malaria by 50 per cent by the year 2010 and 75 per cent by the year 2015. United Nations organizations and agencies continue to work together on the reduction of maternal mortality, which is affected by HIV/AIDS and malaria, as well as regarding female genital mutilation. As a result of UNFPA advocacy efforts on the elimination of harmful traditional practices, coupled with intervention by UNIFEM and UNICEF, a number of African countries,

including Senegal, Togo, Ghana and Burkina Faso, passed legislation outlawing the practice of female genital mutilation.

71. Within the framework of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative Health Cluster led by the World Bank and WHO, 42 African countries have participated in the intercountry consultations on health sector reform and are in the process of formulating national action plans. IN support of decentralization policies in many African countries, UNFPA, in collaboration with the World Bank, is providing support for the organization and implementation of training workshops on health sector reforms. One of the main objectives of this support is to design the modalities of integration of reproductive health in such reforms. To combat the high maternal morbidity and mortality in most African countries, UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF are working as partners to support the provision of reproductive health information and services. To improve further the health of the population, there is a need to mobilize adequate resources from both international and domestic sources to implement national health sector reform programmes and address priority public-health programmes.

72. The Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) of WFP is operational in 28 African countries and is being formulated in 12 others. In addition, 83 Vietnamese experts and field technicians are working with Senegalese farmers involved in SPFS. Agreements were also recently signed between China and Ethiopia, India and Eritrea, Morocco and the Niger, Morocco and Burkina Faso, Viet Nam and Benin, China and Mauritania, and Egypt and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Focusing on social justice

73. The United Nations and its agencies are involved in a number of activities geared towards creating an enabling environment for enhancing the effectiveness of the informal sector in both rural and urban areas. ILO and ECA are the lead organizations for the priority area of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative concerning poverty reduction through the promotion of the informal sector and employment-generating opportunities. One major programme being implemented by ILO since July 1998 has been the Jobs for Africa programme. The immediate objective of the programme is to develop and strengthen the capacity of national and regional institutions and networks in 10 participating countries (phase one) to design and advocate alternative policies for poverty reduction through the generating of productive employment.

74. The Secretariat prepared in 1998 a publication highlighting 14 case studies of innovative efforts of Africans, including Governments and non-governmental organizations, in poverty eradication, with a view to disseminating good practices and approaches. It also organized in December 1998, in Banjul, the Gambia, an Asia-Africa meeting on increasing productivity and competitiveness in the informal sector in Africa, which provided an opportunity for the exchange of Asian-African experiences in increasing productivity, including marketing strategies, in the informal sector.

75. The Secretariat, through the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, supports over 100 projects in various African countries in the areas of social

policy, poverty eradication and management of social change, and also provides advisory services in these areas. ECA organized in March 1999 subregional follow-up conferences on the World Summit for Social Development, which provided opportunities for countries to share experiences and best practices, in particular poverty eradication policies and strategies.

Eliminating all forms of discrimination against women

76. In 1998, ECA prepared "Status of women in Africa, 1998: 53 country profiles", which included selected indicators in some areas of concern contained in the Beijing Platform for Action,[1] such as women in decision-making, education, health, the economic contribution of women and the rights of women and the girl child. The profiles are intended to serve as information, sensitization and advocacy tools by providing a clear picture of the extent to which African Governments have succeeded in implementing international instruments aimed at achieving gender equality.

77. The Secretariat is involved in efforts to encourage African States to ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to encourage those States that are parties to the Convention to submit the reports required under article 18 of the Convention. To encourage national implementation of the Convention, UNIFEM has launched a series of projects to strengthen the capacity of women's groups, the media and the legal profession to use the Convention as a tool to bring about gender equality. UNIFEM has also launched a two-year campaign for a life free of violence against women and girls and supports 56 projects in Africa aimed at eliminating gender-based violence against women through its Violence Trust Fund.

78. UNCTAD has conducted a series of studies on enhancing the participation of women entrepreneurs in the least developed countries, in order to assess the impact of policies on promoting entrepreneurship among women and to identify those measures that have not been implemented but that need to be in place for women to become and remain entrepreneurs in the formal sector. The least developed countries selected for the project are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

Restructuring international aid

79. The level of international expert technical assistance in official development assistance (ODA) continues to be rather high, a concern that was noted in my report. In an effort to redesign technical assistance to close the technical capacity gap between industrialized and developing countries by accelerating the transfer of knowledge, skills and expertise, emphasis is placed on national execution of projects. UNDP, which has pioneered national execution, is leading the review of this modality in order to improve on its practicality and effectiveness. In cooperation with the Federation of African Consultants, it is designing a sound framework to address this issue for which the United Nations advocacy role is critical to the long-term solution.

Reducing debt burdens

80. In a recent report entitled "Finding solutions to the debt problems of developing countries", the Secretariat has made a number of proposals for an enhanced initiative on debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries. Among the issues highlighted was the urgent need for post-conflict economic rehabilitation assistance of 11 heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) in sub-Saharan Africa. For those countries, measures beyond the framework of the HIPC Debt Initiative may be required, including new approaches for providing early assistance and lending into or providing assistance under arrears.

81. In its 1998 Trade and Development Report,[2] UNCTAD proposed the establishment of a body composed of high-level personalities and experts in finance and development, appointed jointly by creditors and debtors, to undertake an independent assessment of the debt sustainability of African countries, with an undertaking by creditors to write off debt considered unpayable. The statement adopted by the ECA Joint Conference of Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Economic and Social Development and Planning in May 1999 urged industrialized countries to take the lead in agreeing to complete cancellation of debts arising from bilateral aid for the poorest countries and reduction of all other bilateral debts of the poorest countries by at least 90 per cent. It emphasized the need for an Africa-driven agenda in donor programmes and the importance of adequate representation of Africa and its views in all international intergovernmental bodies that might be set up to consider reforms of the international financial architecture.

82. The 1999 Cologne debt initiative adopted by the Group of Seven (G-7) countries was designed to provide deeper, broader and faster debt relief through major changes to the HIPC framework. The central objective of the initiative is to provide a greater focus on poverty reduction by releasing resources for investment in health, education and social needs. In this context, the Cologne initiative also supports good governance and sustainable development. The initiative proposed to reduce the debt stock of countries qualified under the HIPC initiative at $71 billion in net present value (NPV) by an additional US$ 27 billion. The additional forgiveness of debts in ODA of some US$ 20 billion in nominal terms by G-7 and the Russian Federation would also further decrease Africa's debt burden.

83. There have been a number of positive developments recently at the bilateral level in relation to debt relief for African countries. In 1998, the Government of Norway launched the Norwegian Debt Relief Strategy which aims at reducing the debt burden of the poorest and heavily indebted countries. In addition to increasing its contribution to IMF operations in favour of the poorest countries by granting an additional loan of US$ 300 million for the period from July 1999 to December 2000, the Government of Belgium has committed itself to cancelling the debt of the last 40 years for countries that are not eligible under the debt initiative. These countries will be selected for debt relief subject to criteria such as good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. Already 12 African countries, including Benin, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, the Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, have benefited from cancellation of their debt under bilateral arrangements.

Opening international markets

84. At a meeting that I held with representatives of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries in September 1998 to urge the implementation of recommendations on debt, ODA, market access and FDI, participants reaffirmed that, although efforts had been made to increase the market access for African exports in the framework of the World Trade Organization and in the Lomé Convention, there was a need for greater access to the markets of industrialized countries. The Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development that I convened in October 1998 also stressed the need for addressing high tariffs and tariff escalation that continue to exist in certain sectors of interest to African countries, such as agricultural products, textiles and clothing, and leather products.

85. In response my recommendation that South-South cooperation be used to reinforce export-led growth in Africa, the Republic of Korea organized, jointly with the Secretariat, the "Forum on Asia-Africa Cooperation in Export Promotion" at Seoul in December 1998. The Forum provided an opportunity to review both the Asian experience and the challenges facing Africa in export promotion and diversification, and adopted the Seoul Framework for Cooperation.

86. UNCTAD's publication on "Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Performance and Potential" presents a positive view of the investment potential in Africa. In cooperation with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), UNCTAD produced the first in a series of investment guides for least developed countries in cooperation with the Ethiopian Investment Authority. Similar work has also started in Mali and work is planned for other African countries.

Adjusting to a globally competitive trade environment

87. Traditional donor countries are responding positively to the trade and investment opportunities available in African countries. The Government of Norway has established the Norwegian Risk Fund for Developing Countries to promote participation in the establishment of sustainable and profitable businesses. In 1998, the first year of operation, 47 per cent of the 400 million Norwegian kroner allocated to the Fund was used to support investment in African countries.

Support for regional cooperation and integration

88. SADC, in cooperation with UNIDO, organized in 1998 at Windhoek a workshop with a view to defining or formulating industrial policy and strategies for SADC. Significant support has been provided by UNIDO for the leather sector in Eastern Africa through a regional project involving nine countries, namely, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

89. UNESCO is working towards promoting regional and subregional cooperation in the area of telematics and the information society through a Regional Informatics Network for Africa which links focal points in 42 Member States concerned with promoting the use of information and communication technologies in development. Activities include support for subregional training courses and

promotion of the African content of the World Wide Web for educational, scientific, social and cultural development.

90. WMO is supporting activities related to the application of meteorological and hydrological information to the sustainable development plans of regional development groupings such as ECOWAS, IGADD, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and SADC. The information is used in development activities such as food production and security, water resources assessment and management, mitigation of weather- and climate-related disasters (floods, droughts, tropical cyclones and so on), transport, energy, and climate change and its potential impact.

91. UNFPA is providing substantial support to both regional and subregional entities in the implementation of their population and development programmes. For example, the Fund cooperates with the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) by providing support for a management information system to monitor maternal mortality, contraceptive prevalence, implementation of population programmes and migration in West Africa. The Fund is also cooperating with SADC in the preparation of the 2001 census initiatives that are being planned in SADC member States.

92. The International Trade Centre (ITC) is currently implementing a South-South trade development and cooperation programme, which is designed to strengthen the ties between the business sectors in Africa and other regions. UNCTAD also organized an Asia-Africa Business Networking Forum at Kuala Lumpur in March 1999 which led to over 15 cooperation and marketing agreements.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

93. My report on the causes of conflict in Africa and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa attracted wide interest and attention and has been discussed and analysed in various forums, within and outside the United Nations system. There has been a very encouraging response to the report from Governments, research and academic institutions, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations and individuals, many of whom have used the debate surrounding the report as an opportunity to contribute to the search for peace and development in Africa.

94. Above all, the report set out to provide a candid analysis of the causes of conflict in Africa and the reasons why conflicts persist. It also underscored the interrelationship between peace and development: development that neglects social and political factors is often derailed by conflict and, conversely, conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building are meaningless unless they enable a society to develop. I recommended in my report a set of actions and goals that I believed were both realistic and achievable to help reduce conflict and build a strong and durable peace. Much progress needs to be achieved.

95. Africa, today, on the eve of the new millennium, reveals a remarkable combination of accomplishments and unresolved problems, of opportunities seized and chances missed. The birth of so many new States in Africa this century, with all the attendant euphoria and high expectations, has been quickly followed by disillusionment and disappointment.

96. There are places in Africa where Governments persist in spending money on weapons they can ill afford for wars they should not fight; where conflicts are seen as business opportunities for arms merchants and rebel groups alike; where poor governance deprives people of basic needs; where silence about AIDS exacerbates the epidemic; where corruption thwarts economic growth; and where crushing debt burdens, trade barriers and declining aid make it extremely hard for African nations to attract investment and stave off further marginalization from the global economy. There are, in short, places where the widely held view of Africa as a region in perpetual crisis is not just an image but an all-too-grim and painful reality. Civil war prevents many sick, hungry civilians from receiving international humanitarian assistance.

97. Yet there are also places - many more than is commonly recognized - where we are witnessing dramatic changes for the better. This year, Nigeria, the giant of Africa, has achieved an impressively quick return to civilian rule after multi-party elections, while South Africa, the continent's economic powerhouse, has successfully held its second democratic election, as well as undergone a smooth transition from the tenure of President Mandela to that of President Mbeki. Democratic elections are gradually becoming the norm, and not the exception, in Africa. Good governance, accountability, transparency, and the rule of law, are slowly gaining ground in each region of Africa. What the outside world may not have noticed is that much of what is has been calling for is now happening.

98. Many African nations are liberalizing trade and exchange controls, privatizing moribund State industries, building up communications infrastructures and reforming their legal and regulatory frameworks. UNCTAD recently published a study showing that investment in Africa brings a higher return to United States and Japanese companies than any other region of the world. Indeed, Africa's profitability is one of the best-kept secrets in today's world economy. Financial reform and incentives for production are now widespread, while serious efforts are under way to streamline bloated, inefficient bureaucracies in many African States.

99. Africans are also taking charge of their political fortunes. There is a new, refreshing willingness to acknowledge past mistakes and sincerely work together for a better common future. The Abuja Treaty (A/46/651, annex), establishes an African Economic Community - to be gradually built using the subregional groupings as building blocks. The Sirte Declaration adopted by the OAU Extraordinary Summit in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 9 September 1999, commits the leaders of Africa to move rapidly towards uniting the continent. A majority of Africans now live under pluralistic systems, and at this year's OAU Summit in Algiers, Africa's leaders insisted - in a welcome change from earlier years - on the principle that leaders who assumed power by violence could no longer expect to be received as equals in an assembly of elected heads of State.

100. Through the sustained diplomatic efforts of African countries themselves, important breakthroughs have been made in the search for negotiated solutions in some of the protracted conflicts - for example, the Lomé Agreement for Sierra Leone (S/1999/777, annex), the Lusaka accords for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/1999/815, annex). Significant progress has been made in efforts to negotiate peace in the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The United

Nations has facilitated these and other such efforts and will continue to give priority to strengthening the various liaison arrangements with OAU and its subregional organizations.

101. A beginning has been made in the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and African regional organizations and for the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity. However, the necessary resources have not yet been made available. I appeal to Member States to be generous, bilaterally, multilaterally and to the United Nations and OAU trust funds. The Secretariat's efforts are severely constrained - and in some cases even jeopardized - by the absence of resources.

102. Certainly Africa could do more to put an end to its conflicts. Conflicts in Angola and the Sudan have persisted long past the time when either side could retain faith in a military solution. But these prolonged tragedies should not obscure the efforts that Africans are making elsewhere which also merit the international community's strong support.

103. Whether we are speaking of peace and security issues or related questions, such as social development, environmental protection, human rights or human resources, it is essential to think in terms of partnerships with Africa. Of course, it falls first to Africans to help themselves; but those nations making good-faith efforts and adopting enlightened politics deserve much greater support than they are now receiving. Where the international community is committed to making a difference, it has proved that significant and rapid transformation can be achieved. There is no excuse for not doing what is reasonable and doable.

104. Increased ODA remains a necessary part of the picture. More decisive action on debt is an urgent requirement. It is reasonable, for example, to increase contributions for humanitarian assistance. As of 31 August, the United Nations had received only half of the $800 million it had requested to meet humanitarian needs in Africa in 1999. In some of the most acute emergencies, less than a quarter of what is needed has been provided. The consequences are plain: lives that could have been saved are lost; suffering that could have been lessened is left to follow its course.

105. What is "reasonable and doable" is far from being a question of money alone. Training, technology, political engagement - there are many paths for partnership to follow. The overarching point is that with will and wherewithal on the part of both Africa and the international community, peace and development in Africa can be given decisive new momentum. "Afro-pessimism" is a dead-end. "Africa fatigue" is an affront to the idea of a caring international community. Never have the nations of Africa been better placed to benefit from outside involvement and help. The right kind of assistance now, carefully directed to those best able to use it, could boost Africa's own courageous efforts, and help Africans turn a corner and set the stage for a brighter future.

Notes

[1] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.II.D.6.